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## Istook Brings Computers to Schools

### Reforms to Goals 2000 Gives States More Control of Education

*Washington, D.C.* – Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK) today announced significant changes to Goals 2000, signed into law, as one step closer to reducing federal control of education. The measure passed in the 1996 “omnibus Appropriations bill” signed by the President on April 26, 1996.

After several unsuccessful efforts to zero out funding for Goals 2000, Istook added provisions, along with those from Senator Arlen Specter (R-Penn.), to reduce federal strings and eliminate much of the bureaucracy in Goals 2000. Istook’s provision allows schools to use 100 percent of their funds for the purchase of computers and the advancement of technology.

**“The changes in Goals 2000 sidetracks the federal funding from bureaucracy to computers,”** stated Istook. **“The computers allow for capital investment in the schools and the students’ education. Even if we succeed in eliminating Goals 2000 next year, the schools will still have their computers.”**

Specter added a measure that allows schools to apply to the Department of Education directly for Goals 2000 funding, if their state education agency chooses not to take the money. Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating decided not to take Goals 2000 funds, which, under this new law, gives local school districts authority to apply for the money themselves.

**“The Goals 2000 reform is one step closer to returning power of education back to states and local schools,”** added Istook. **“These changes siphon money away from entrenchment and the bureaucracy of Goals 2000, and invest it in computers for students, a practical device for learning.”**

Other changes the new law made to Goals 2000 include:

- Schools no longer need federal approval of their education plans.
- Schools can now teach their students based on real academic standards, rather than “feel-good learning” based on the level at which *all* students can learn.
- Schools are no longer required to provide school-based health clinics.
- Parents’ rights are protected to guide their children’s education.

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